

## COMMENTS

All of the Examiner's rejections are based upon U.S. Patent No. 6,335,501 to Khalfan as the primary reference. Khalfan, however, is not prior art to the present application.

The Khalfan patent has a filing date of February 4, 2000.

The present application was filed on February 29, 2000 and claims benefit of provisional Application 60/180,373 which was filed on February 4, 2000. See MPEP §706.02.V.(D) which reads as follows:

“(D) If the application properly claims benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) to a provisional application, the effective filing date is the filing date of the provisional application for any claims which are fully supported under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112 by the provisional application.”

Applicant is enclosing herewith a copy of the provisional. As is shown on the claim chart beginning on the following page, each of the rejected independent claims 1, 12, 26 and 31 are fully supported by and entitled to the filing date of Applicant's provisional application. Accordingly those claims, and all claims dependent therefrom, should be allowed.